Donatello

Art 485 is a senior seminar designed to allow junior and senior art history majors a chance to examine the discipline of art history by focusing on one artist or movement. Emphasis is placed on critical reading and interpretation of images through class discussion, scholarly writing, and formal presentations.

Course Objectives and Description
This course will introduce students to advanced critical methods of art history through an extensive examination of the Renaissance sculptor, Donatello. Donatello is one of the most famous and important Renaissance artists, and is also one of the most difficult figures of the period for the art historian to analyze. Students will be introduced to the biography of the artist, the sculptures associated with him, his influence on followers, and his impact on the history of art. Students will fully engage themselves with an extensive bibliography, intensive critical debates, and critical issues of iconography, connoisseurship, patronage, and the contextualization of Donatello’s works. A crucial aspect of the course is to learn how art historians select objects and subjects for research, how they investigate works of art, and how they employ different methodologies in the course of critical analysis.

Grading:
- Several Informal Presentations to be assigned weekly (with 1-page summaries)
- 1 Formal Presentation (20 minute talk with slides, followed by response from a critical audience)
- 1 research paper with full bibliography (and a preliminary draft)
Preliminary Bibliography I: Important Books on Donatello in English


Greenhalgh, Michael, Donatello and His Sources, New York, 1982.


Preliminary Bibliography II: Comprehensive list of books and articles on Donatello (Many Languages)


This contains summaries of over 300 articles pertaining to Donatello and is complete to 1986.

II. BHA Online

Rhodes now has a subscription to this comprehensive database. It is searchable through any Rhodes computer and should contain virtually all publications pertaining to Donatello starting where Wilk leaves off.

Note: While there are nice collections of books and journals at Rhodes and U Memphis, do not assume that the article you need is in either library. You should check these sources early and order what you need through interlibrary loan.

Note: With the above resources there is NO excuse for unfamiliarity with the literature.
January 13: Introduction, Questions, and Research Methods
   Introduction to the discipline of art history, discussion of its substance and
   methodologies.
   Review of Research Methods and Sources
   Assignment of Projects

January 20: Methodologies
   Excerpts from this book will be assigned.

January 27: Donatello and Biography
   Read: Pope-Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture, bio and bibliography on Donatello.
   (Chapter 7: Gothic and Renaissance in Tuscan Sculpture; Chapter 10 The Second
   Renaissance Style in Architecture and Sculpture; and Chapter 12: Crisis and
   Crosscurrents).

February 3: The Sculptures of Donatello (I)
   Choose one work from the following list
   The Prophet David
   St John the Evangelist seated, Florence
   St Mark for Or San Michele, Florence
   Marble Statue of David with the Head of Goliath, Florence
   St George Statue, Florence
   St Louis of Toulouse, Florence
   Bearded and Beardless Prophets, Florence
   Jeremiah and Habakkuk, Florence

February 10: The Sculptures of Donatello (II)
   Bust of San Rossore, Pisa
   Coscia Monument, Florence
   Relief of Herod and Saint John, Siena
   Brancacci Tomb, Naples
   Pulpit for Cathedral of Prato
   Cantoria for Cathedral of Florence
   Saint George and the Dragon Relief, Florence
   Ascension Relief, London

Note: John Stomberg Lecture on Burke-White Photographs at 7:00
February 17: The Sculptures of Donatello (III)
St John the Baptist, Venice
Annunciation in Santa Croce, Florence
Bronze David, Florence
Stucco Decoration in San Lorenzo, Florence
Bronze Doors, San Lorenzo, Florence
Gattamelata, Padua
Crucifixion and High Altar Figures, Padua
High Altar Reliefs, Padua

February 24: CAA Convention (Class rescheduled)

March 2: The Sculptures of Donatello (IV)
Pazzi Madonna, Berlin
Madonna of the Clouds, Boston
Chellini Madonna, London
Roundel from Siena Cathedral
Mary Magdalene, Florence
Judith and Holofernes, Florence
St John the Baptist, Siena
San Lorenzo Pulpits, Florence

March 9: Spring Break

March 16: Dress Rehearsal for Formal Presentations
All students.
Formal Presentation by Victor: The Sexuality of Donatello and his Bronze David

March 23: Formal Presentations
4 Students

March 30: Formal Presentations
3 Students
April 6: Class Rescheduled
(I will be at the Midwest College Art Conference delivering a paper on Donatello.)

Tuesday, April 11: James Elkins Lecture at 8:00 in Hardie Auditorium (required)

April 13: Themes and Issues: The followers of Donatello
Michelozzo
Antonio Rossellino
Desiderio da Settignano
Mino da Fiesole
Benedetto da Maiano
Andrea del Verrocchio
Antonio del Pollaiuolo
Bertoldo di Giovanni

April 20: Easter Recess

April 27: Themes and Issues: Attribution Problems
The following sculptures present highly contentious attributional or iconographical problems for class discussion:

Martelli David in the NGW
St Jerome relief in the NGW
Martyrdom of Sebastian (Jacquemart-Andre)
Angels with Candlestick (J-A)
Feast of Herod (Lille)
Bust of Niccolo da Uzzano, Bargello
Pazzi Chapel Roundels, Santa Croce, Florence
*Or another work approved by instructor beforehand*

Papers Due (include copies of summary for each classmate)